



#13
\$2.95

Nightmares & Fairytales

1140 Rue Royale



Written by Serena Valentino
Art by Crab Scrambly



NIGHTMARES & FAIRY TALES #13

1140 RUE ROYALE — PART ONE OF SIX

STORY: SERENA VALENTINO

ILLUSTRATION: CRAB SCRAMBLY

LETTERING: JOSHUA ARCHER

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A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR:

THIS STORY IS A WORK OF FICTION; INSPIRED BY DEBATABLE HISTORICAL EVENTS — IT WAS NOT WRITTEN TO EXPLOIT OR TRIVIALIZE THIS MANNER OF HUMAN SUFFERING AND ATROCITIES — RATHER, I AM REWRITING HISTORY IN AN ATTEMPT AT GIVING THE VICTIMS A VOICE AND A MEANS FOR REVENGE.

SERENA VALENTINO

ANNABELLE SPEAKS:

THIS IS VICTORIA AND REBECCA'S STORY.
BUT MORE TRULY THIS TALE BELONGS TO THE HOUSE
AND THE DEAD THAT INHABIT IT. MY THOUGHTS DO NOT
PENETRATE THIS NARRATIVE. YOU SHALL LEARN THIS STORY
FROM VICTORIA AND REBECCA'S OWN ETERNAL FEELINGS, THEIR
INNERMOST FEARS, DREAMS AND SECRET DESIRES.

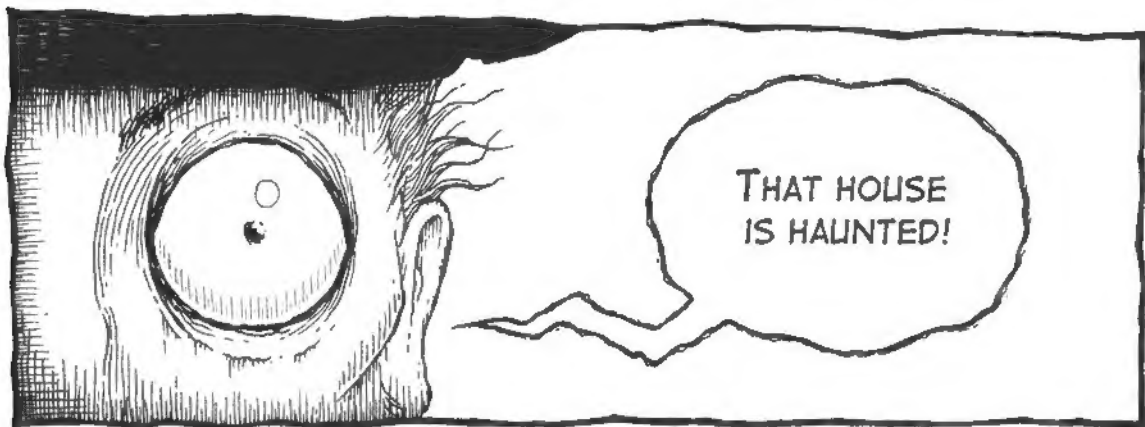
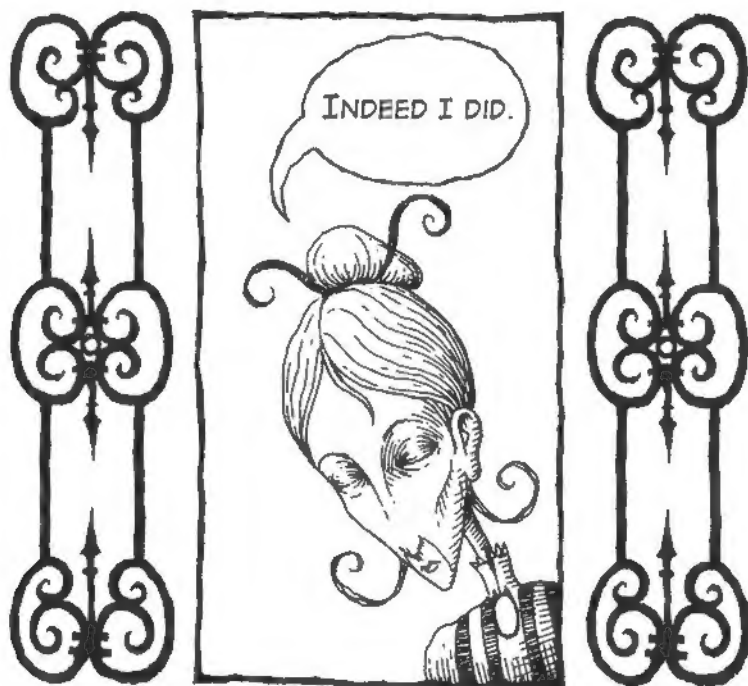
AFTER ALL, I AM PRIVY TO SUCH KNOWLEDGE, AND I THINK SHARING
THEIR SECRETS WITH YOU WILL BRING AN ENTIRELY NEW LIGHT ON
THE PATH I'VE BEEN TAKEN ON. THE HORRORS I'VE WITNESSED,
AND THE WOMEN WHO HAVE POSSESSED ME.

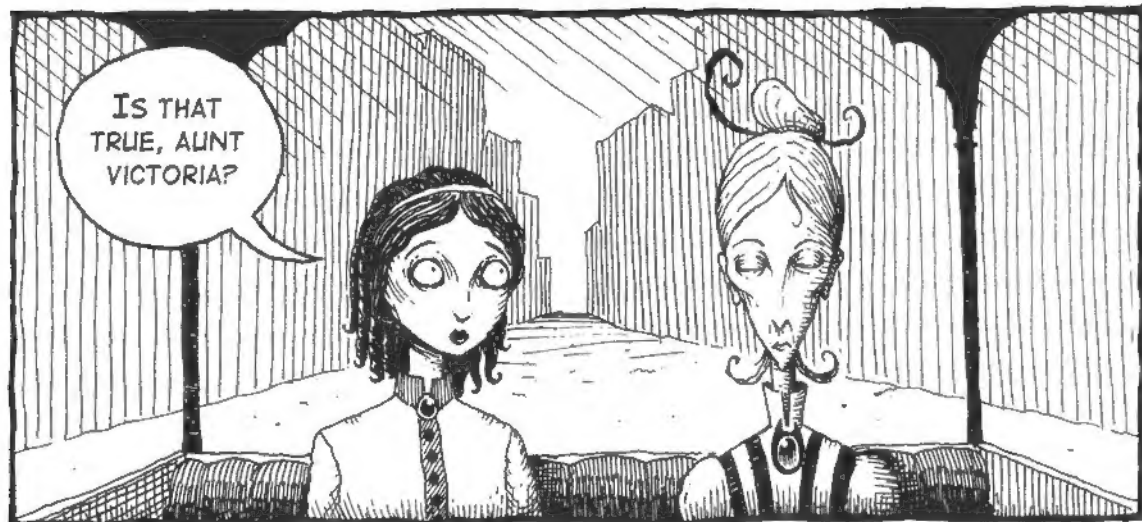
NIGHTMARES & FAIRY TALES, ISSUE #13, JUNE 2005. CREATED BY SERENA VALENTINO & FOO SWEE CHIN (FSC).
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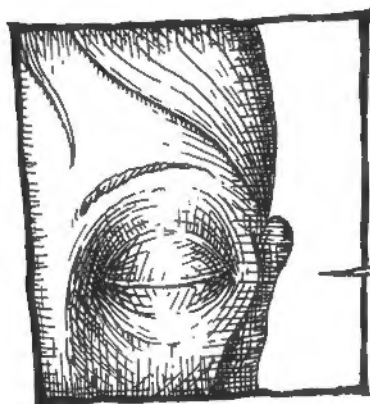
THE CARRIAGE RATTLED
AS IT CROSSED
THE COBBLESTONE PATH,
TAKING VICTORIA
TO HER
NEW HOME.

WILD TALES OF GHOSTS, MURDER AND TORTURE WOULD NOT
DETER HER FROM BUYING THIS HOUSE. SHE LOVED IT, PLAIN AND SIMPLE.
IT WOULD BE HERS - THE GHOSTS AND GHOULS BE DAMNED!





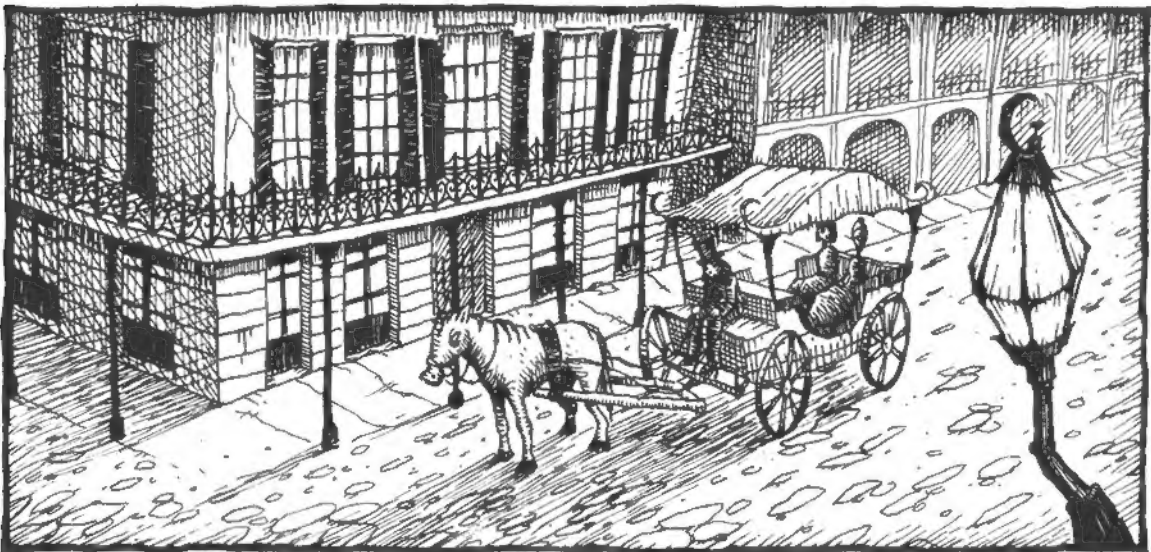
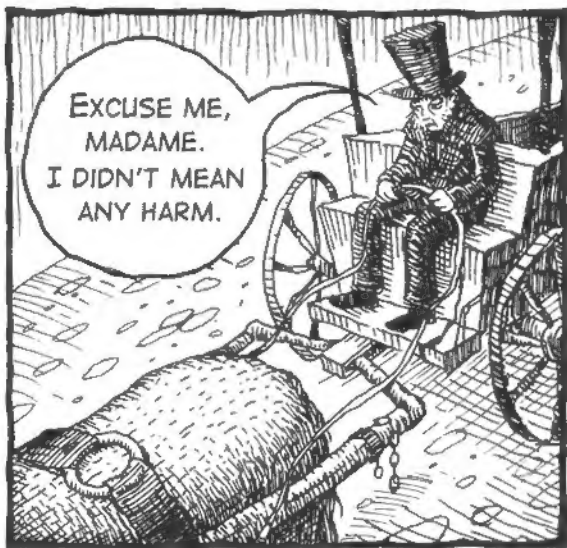
IS THAT
TRUE, AUNT
VICTORIA?

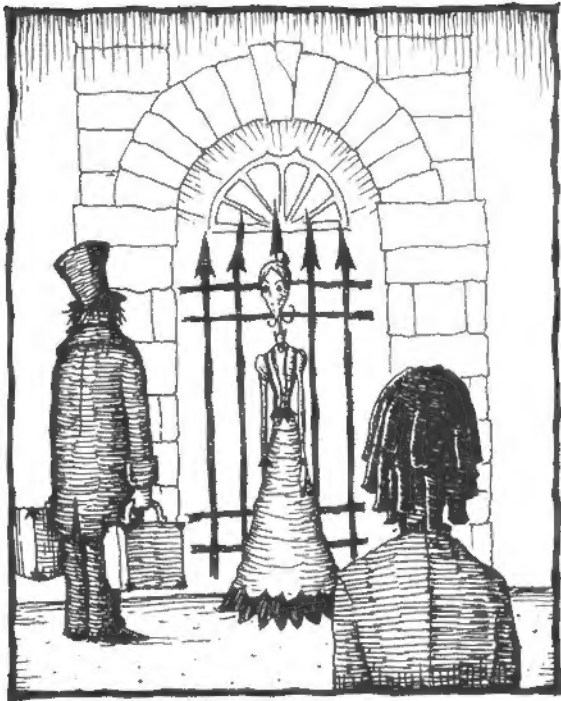


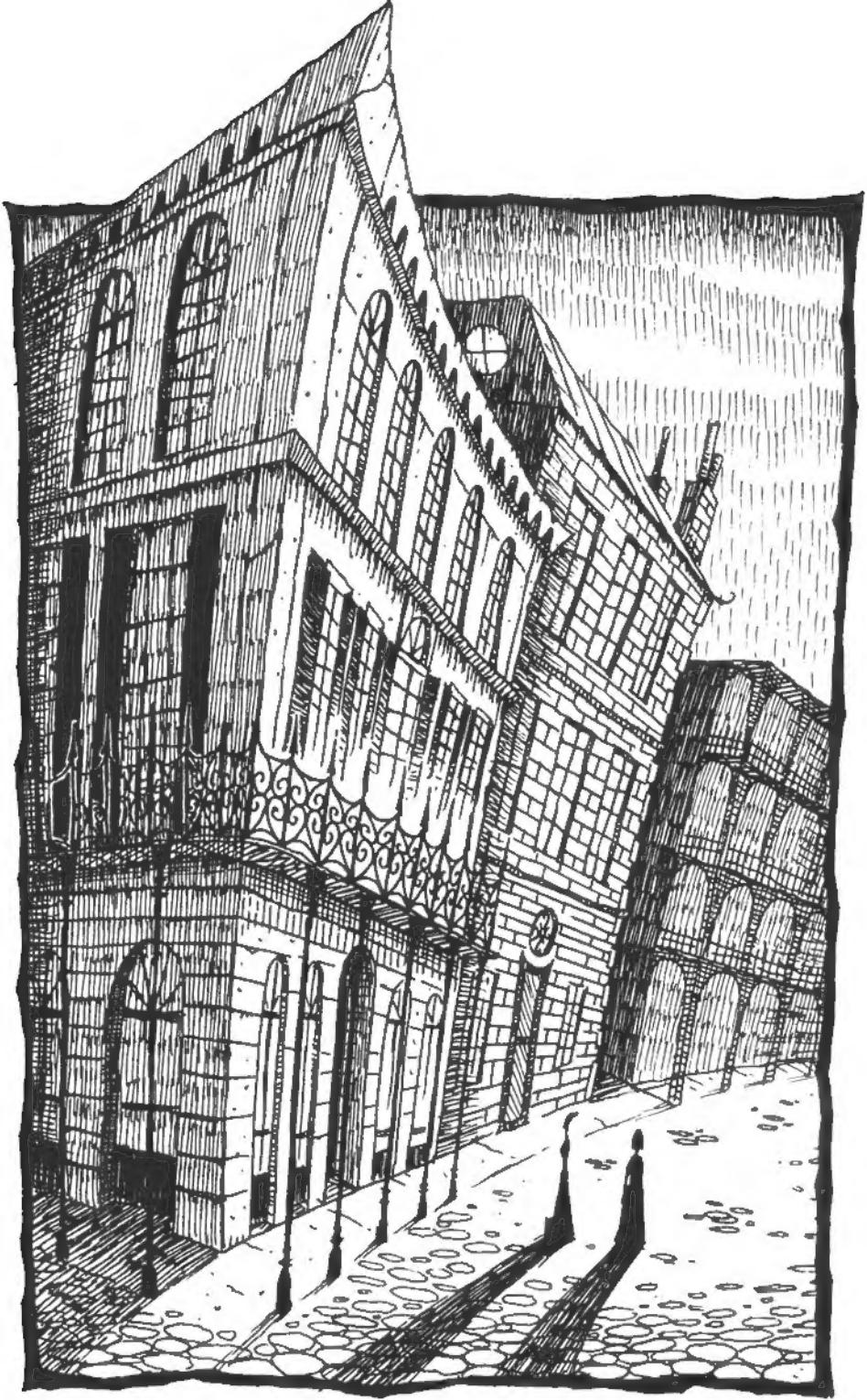
NO,
MY DEAR REBECCA,
IT'S NOT.

THERE HAS NEVER
BEEN A TRUER STATEMENT!
MADAME LALaurIE OWNED
THAT HOUSE. SHE WAS AN
EVIL WOMAN, SHE WAS!
SHE TORTURED HER SLAVES!
SHE DID UNSPEAKABLE THINGS
TO THOSE POOR SOULS,
AND THEY ARE TRAPPED
UP THERE IN
THAT HOUSE!

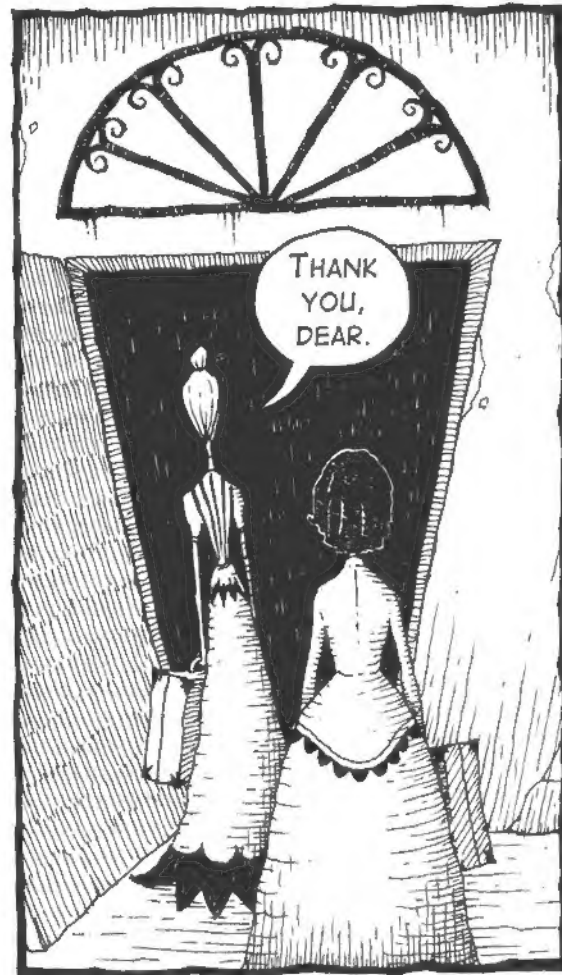
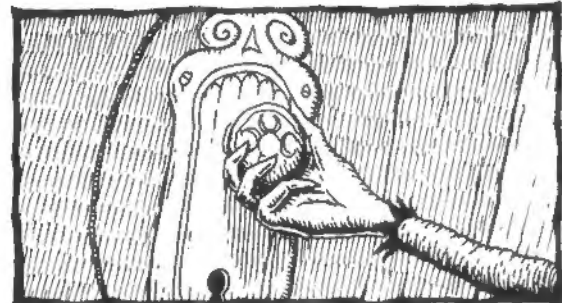
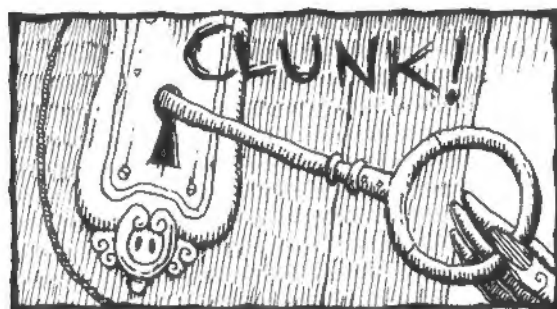
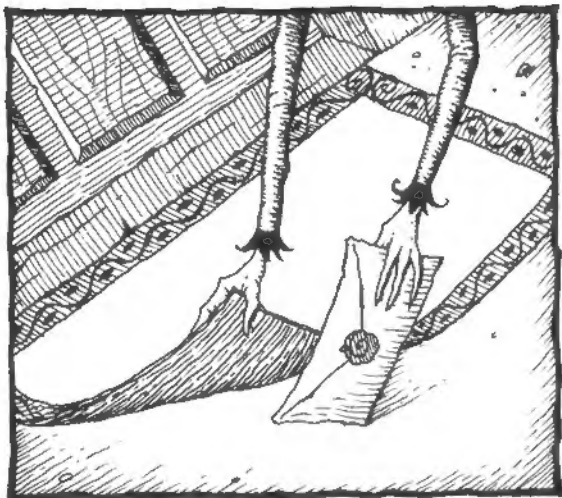








VICTORIA HAD TO ADMIT,
THERE WAS SOMETHING RATHER OMINOUS ABOUT
THE HOUSE. AS SHE LOOKED AT IT, SHE COULDN'T
HELP BUT PULL HER SHAWL A LITTLE TIGHTER
AROUND HER SHOULDERS AS A CHILL OVERTOOK HER.



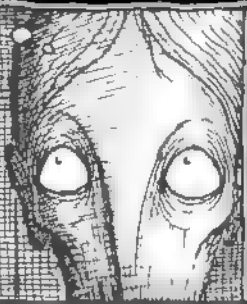


AS VICTORIA SLOWLY MADE HER WAY THROUGH THE ADJOINING DINING AND BALLROOM, SOMETHING OVERCAME HER. SUDDENLY THE ROOM BECAME INFUSED WITH LIGHT AND LAUGHTER. SHE COULD ALMOST SMELL THE CANDLES BURNING IN THE CHANDELIERS OVERHEAD AND FEEL THE WARMTH COMING FROM THE FIREPLACE. COUPLES WERE SPINNING IN CIRCLES AS THEY DANCED TO MUSIC THAT WAS OVERPOWERING AND ALMOST HYPNOTIC TO VICTORIA'S EARS...

THE SOUND BEATING WITHIN HER CHEST...

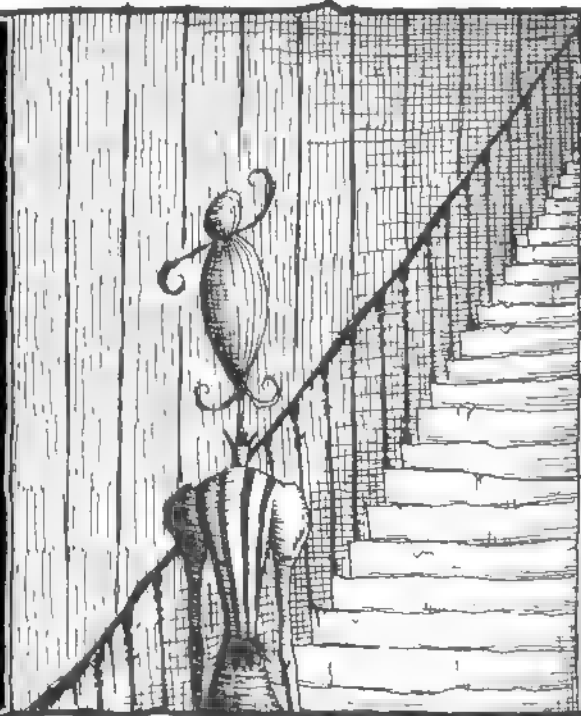
AND WITH A JOLT, VICTORIA WAS BROUGHT BACK TO HERSELF, FEELING WEAK AND SLIGHTLY FAINT.



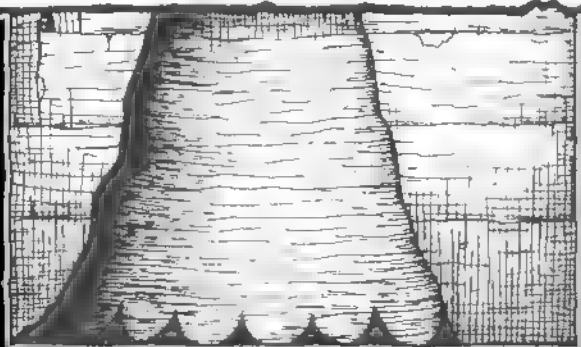


I'M BEING
FOOLISH...
WE JUST NEED
TO OPEN SOME
WINDOWS, AIR IT
OUT AND BRING
IN THE LIGHT!

THE HOUSE SMELLED MUSTY, LIKE OLD WET WOOD, AND EVERYTHING SEEMED TO HAVE A LAYER OF DUST UPON IT. IT SEEMED SO UNINVITING, LIKE THE HOUSE DIDN'T WANT HER THERE.

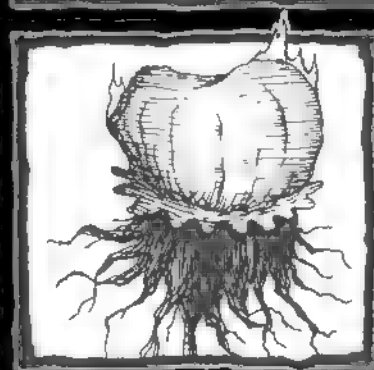
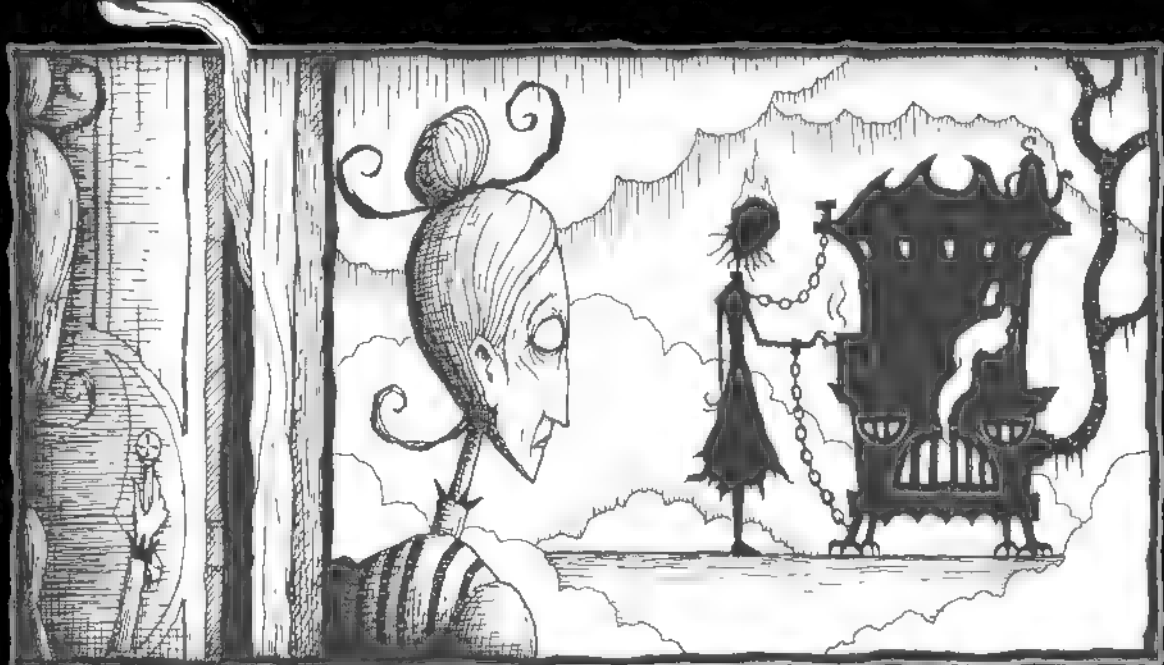


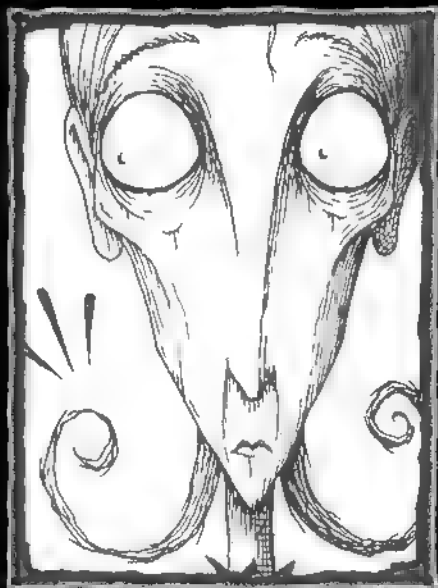
FEELING RATHER ALONE AND A LITTLE FRIGHTENED, VICTORIA MADE HER WAY UP THE STAIRS TO SEE THE BEDROOMS. SHE WAS RELIEVED TO SEE THAT IT WAS MUCH LESS GLOOMY IN THE UPPER ROOMS, ALMOST AS IF SOMEONE HAD BEEN KEEPING HER ROOM, IN PARTICULAR, READY FOR HER USE.



DOWNSTAIRS, SHE COULD HEAR REBECCA BRINGING IN THEIR SUPPLIES. SHE FELT SAFER KNOWING SHE WASN'T ALONE. SHE COULD SMELL REBECCA STARTING A FIRE IN THE WOOD STOVE.









NOTHING
DEAR, NOTHING...
I GUESS I WAS
JUST LOST IN MY
THOUGHTS.



YOU LOOK
SO PALE,
AUNTIE...



ARE YOU
SURE YOU ARE
FEELING
WELL?

I THINK YOU
SHOULD REST,
AUNT VICTORIA.
I WILL COME AND
GET YOU WHEN
DINNER IS
READY.

YES, MY DEAR,
YES, I'M FINE.
I'M GETTING MUCH
TOO OLD, MY DEAR.
DON'T EVER GET OLD,
REBECCA,
PROMISE ME.

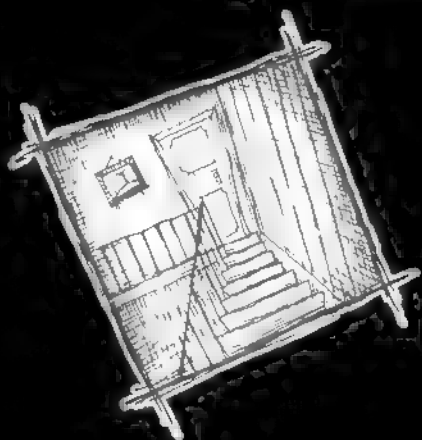
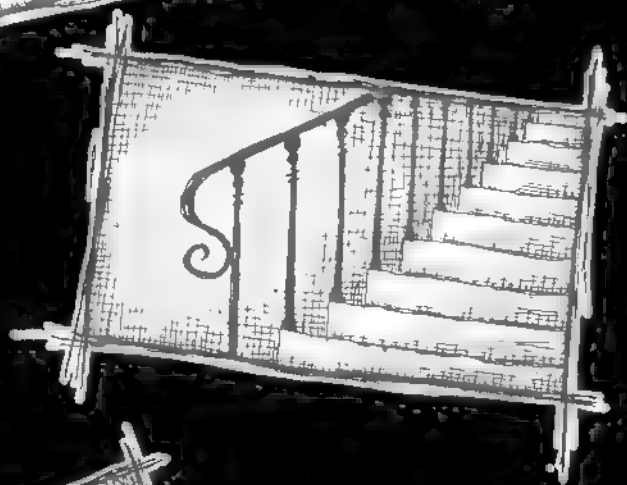
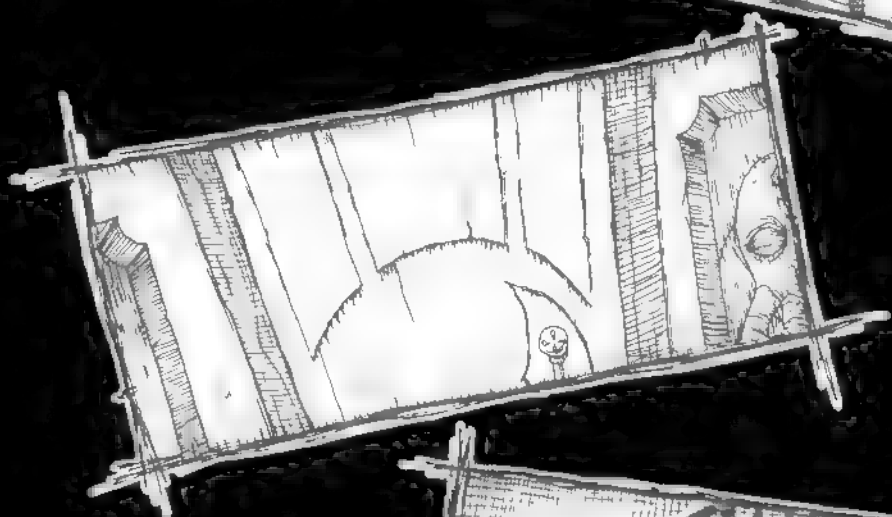
YES, DEAR,
I THINK
YOU'RE RIGHT.

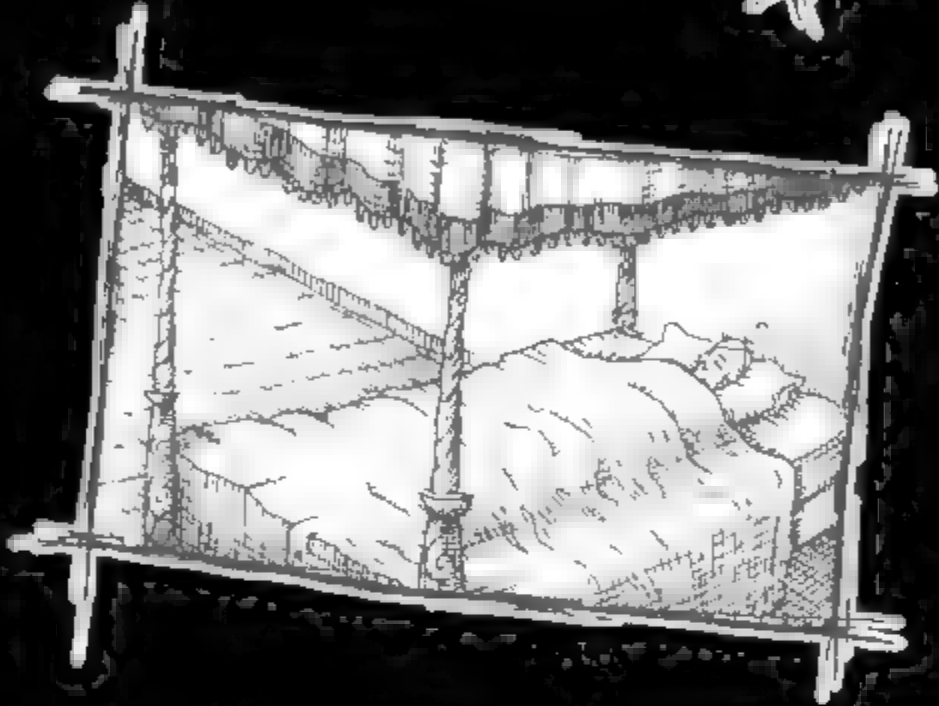
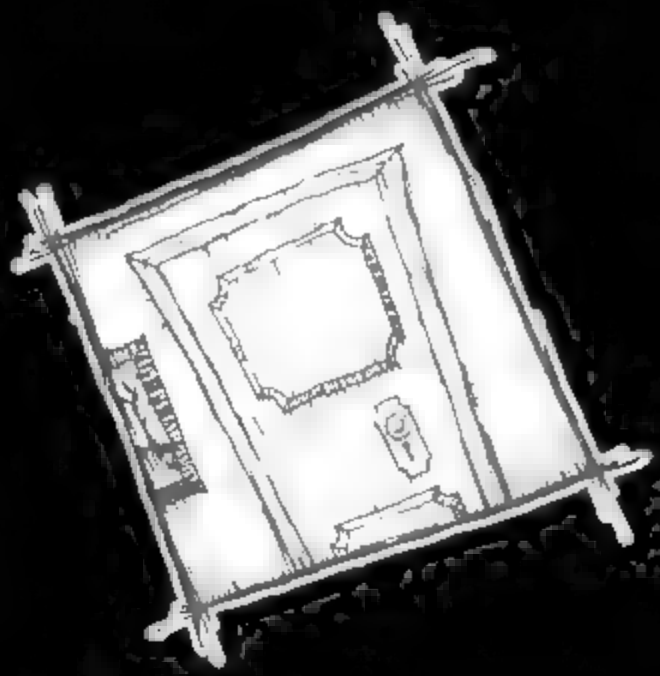




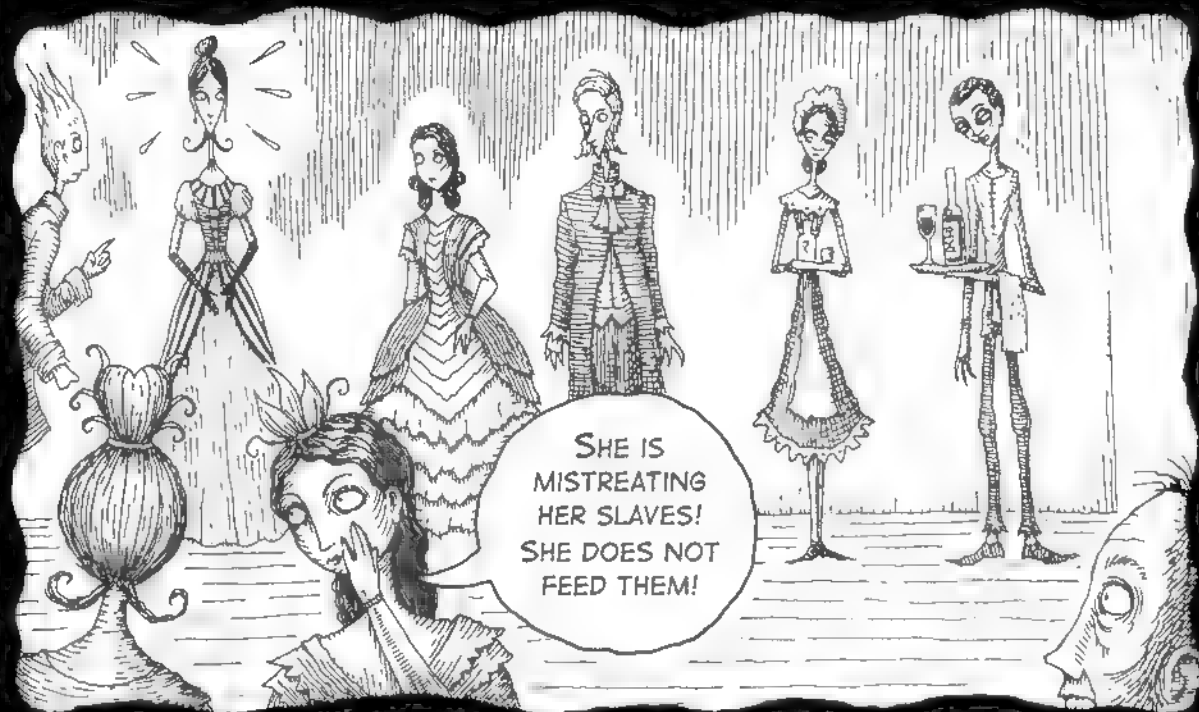
REBECCA STOOD THERE FOR A
FEW MOMENTS STARING
AT THE ASH AND BLACK SMUDGE
AROUND THE STOVE, THINKING
ABOUT THE STORY HER
NEIGHBOR HAD JUST TOLD HER....

HAD A WOMAN REALLY DIED
HERE, CHAINED TO THAT STOVE?
OR WAS MRS. CLAYTON JUST
RELAYING OLD MYTHS?

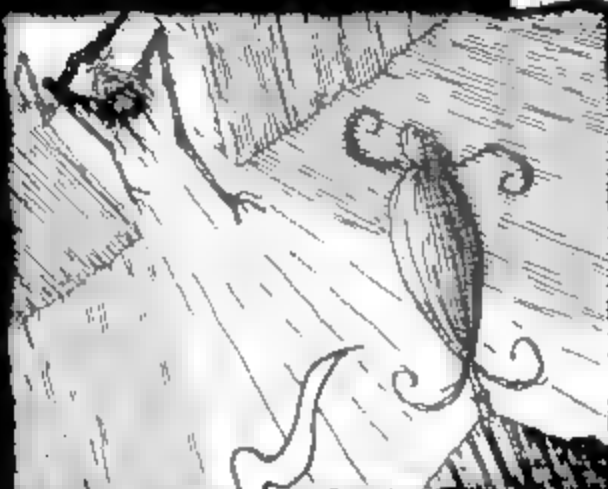






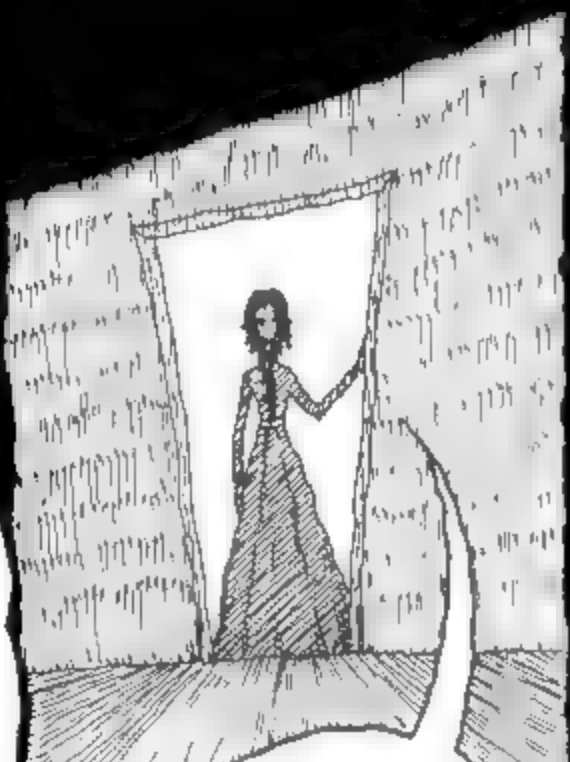


VICTORIA'S HEART WAS RACING AGAIN SHE KNEW SHE WAS DREAMING,
BUT SHE COULD NOT WAKE...THE MUSIC WAS LULLING HER INTO PARALYSIS,
HER HEART POUNDING TO THE RHYTHM, SENDING HER DEEPER WITHIN THE DREAM...
OVERCOME WITH VIBRATION, UNABLE TO MOVE OR WAKE - SURELY
HER HEART WOULD BURST!



FINALLY, VICTORIA WAS ABLE TO OPEN HER EYES, HALF-DREAMING, HARDLY ABLE TO KEEP HER EYES OPEN AS SHE TRIED TO FOCUS ON THE DOORWAY, THE ONE SOURCE OF LIGHT IN THE ROOM. SLOWLY, SHE STARTED TO REGAIN HERSELF, STILL FOCUSING ON THE LIGHT, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THE DOORWAY, SKITTERING...

WHAT IS IT?



REBECCA!
HELP ME!

AUNT VICTORIA,
I HEARD YOU
SCREAM.
WHAT'S THE
MATTER?



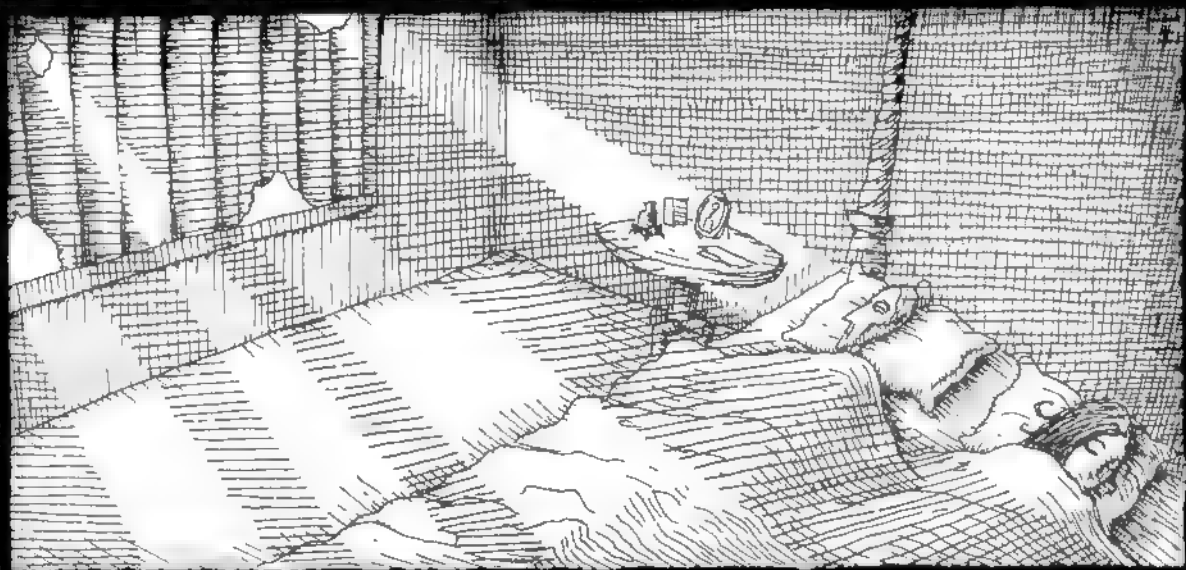
NOTHING DEAR,
NOTHING... JUST A
NIGHTMARE. I'M AFRAID
ALL THE WILD STORIES
ABOUT THIS HOUSE
HAVE AFFECTED ME
AFTER ALL.



THE ROOM WAS WONDROUS, WARM AND INVITING.
VICTORIA ALMOST FORGOT HOW FRIGHTENED SHE REALLY WAS.

AFTER DINNER THE TWO OF THEM SLIPPED IN TO BED TOGETHER.
THEY BOTH SLEPT DREAMLESSLY... DEEP, MARVELOUS SLEEP.

THEY WOKE THE NEXT DAY
TO SUN STREAMING THROUGH THE MOTH-EATEN CURTAINS.



VICTORIA WAS ONCE AGAIN FILLED WITH EXCITEMENT. THE HOUSE SEEMED LIGHTER, BRIGHTER AND SO MUCH MORE INVITING IN THE LIGHT OF DAY. SHE WOULD CLAIM IT! AFTER ALL, IT WAS HERS! SHE HAD BEEN SILLY TO LET HER DREAM GET THE BEST OF HER.

GOOD MORNING, AUNTIE. DID YOU SLEEP WELL?

DARLING, WAKE UP.

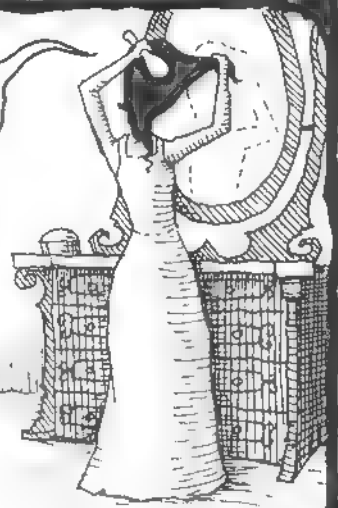
I DID, MY DEAR. WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO OUT FOR THE AFTERNOON? WE COULD DO SOME SHOPPING AND HAVE A BIT OF LUNCH.

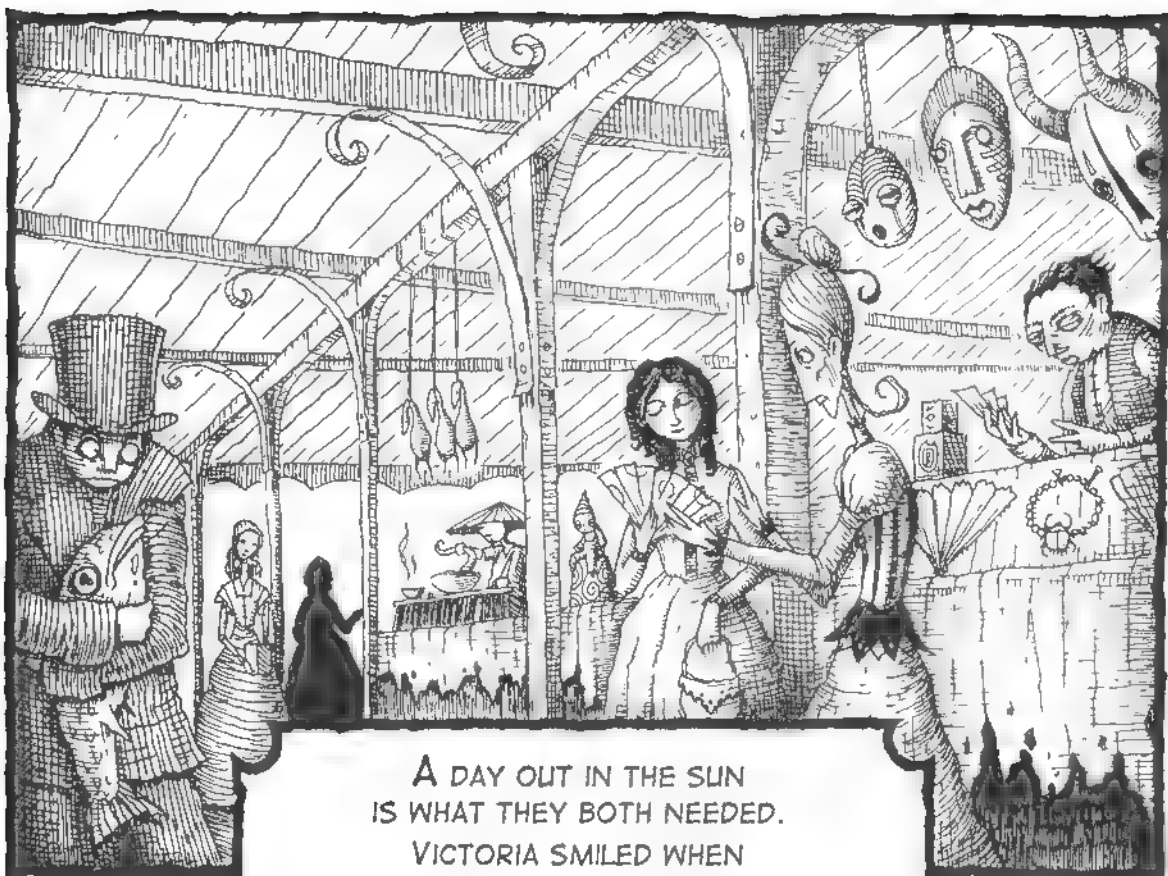
I WOULD LOVE THAT.

SPLENDID. THAT WAY WE WON'T BE UNDER THE CLEANING LADY'S FEET, AND BY THE TIME WE COME HOME THE HOUSE WON'T BE SO GLOOMY.

THERE'S A CLEANING WOMAN COMING TODAY?

YES, AND WE'D BETTER GET READY BEFORE SHE ARRIVES. COME ON, DEAR. WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A LOVELY DAY.





A DAY OUT IN THE SUN
IS WHAT THEY BOTH NEEDED.
VICTORIA SMILED WHEN
SHE SAW THE COLOR
IN REBECCA'S CHEEKS HAD RETURNED
AND THAT HER FACE WAS BRIGHT
WITH HAPPINESS ONCE AGAIN.

SHE SEEMS
BETTER. BUT
DID I DO WELL
TO BRING
HER HERE?

YOU'RE WELCOME,
MY DEAR. BUT IT LOOKS
LIKE THE DAY HAS UTTERLY
SLIPPED AWAY FROM US
WE HAD BETTER
HEAD HOME.

THANK
YOU FOR A
WONDERFUL
DAY, AUNTIE.

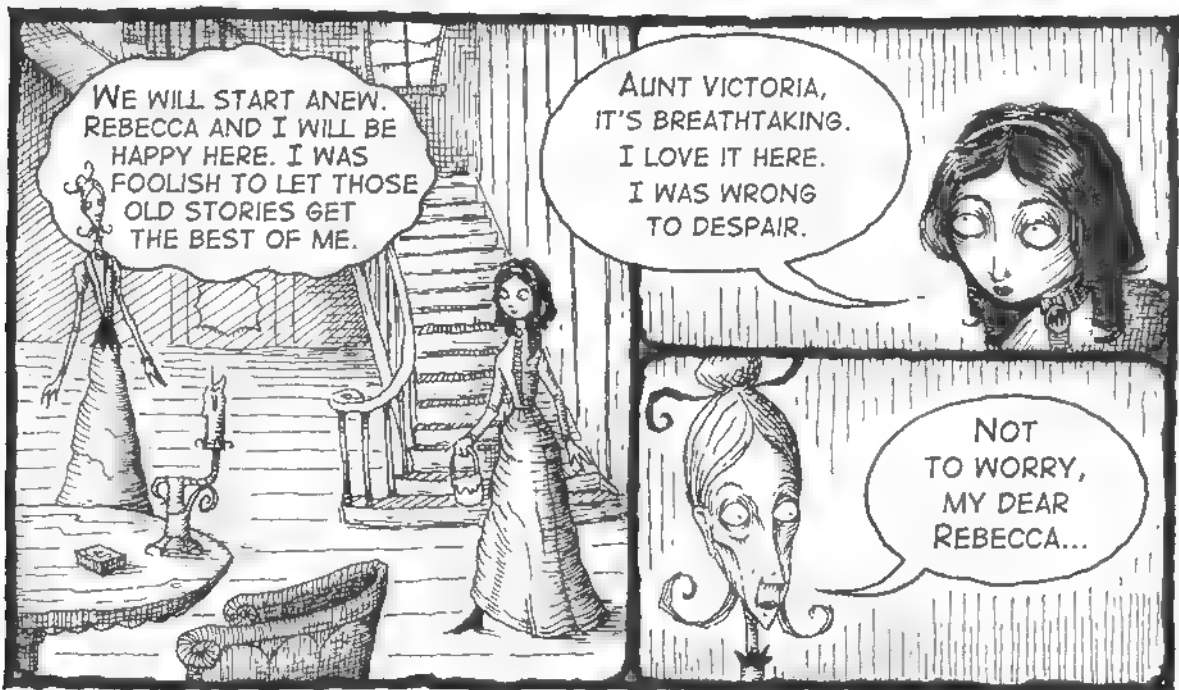
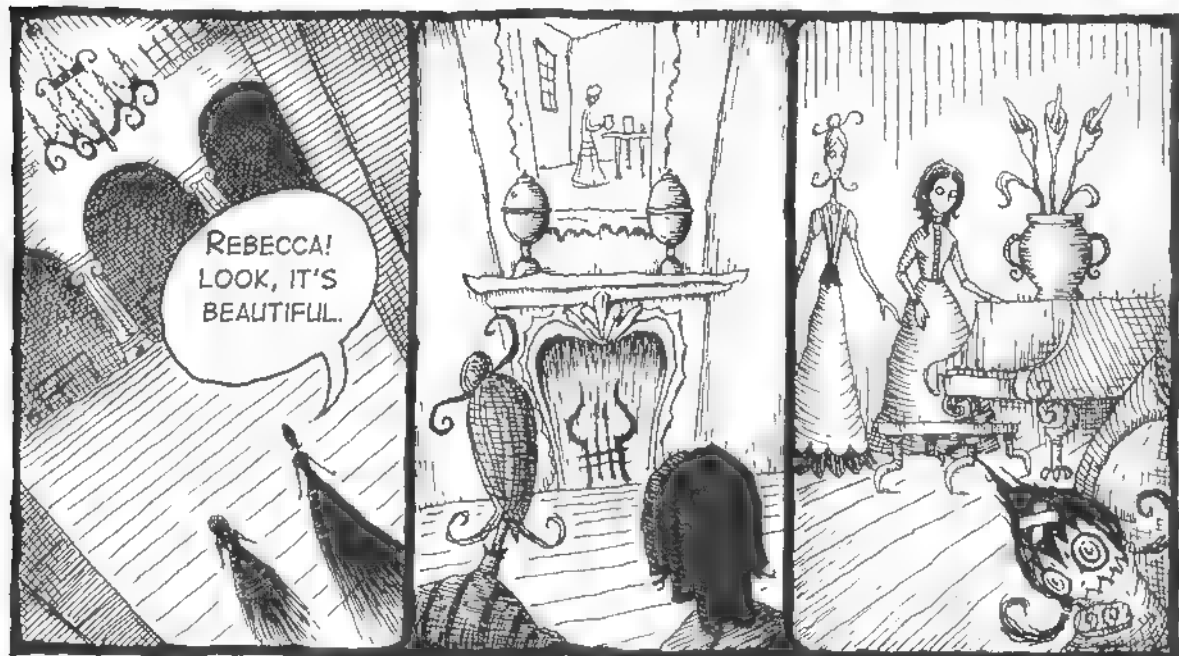


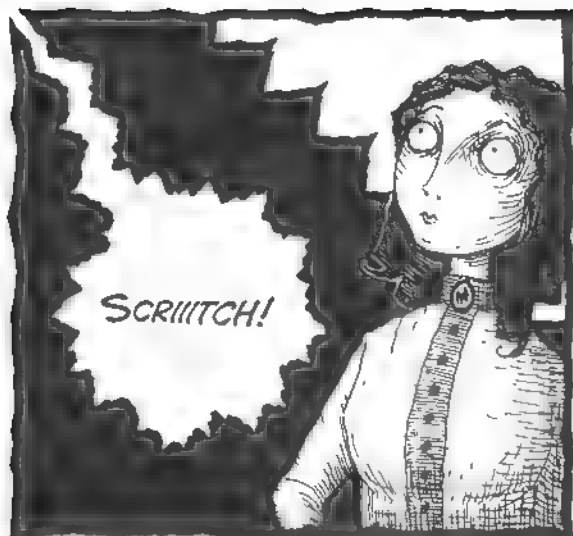


THE CHEERFULNESS OF THEIR DAY,
ALONG WITH THE HOUSE'S MAGNIFICENT TRANSFORMATION,
PUT THEM INSTANTLY AT EASE.

IT SEEMED NOTHING BUT THIS DAY EXISTED.

THE TWO LADIES WENT FROM ROOM TO ROOM
AND MARVELED AT HOW LOVELY IT WAS. WHAT SEEMED TO BE
AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK HAD BEEN COMPLETED
IN ONE GLORIOUS AFTERNOON.





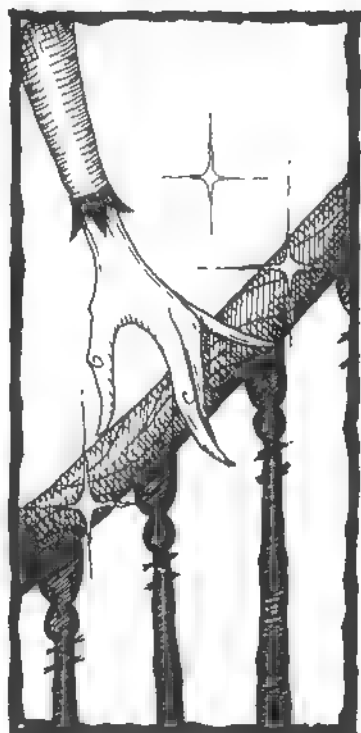
VICTORIA RAN HER HAND ALONG THE RAILING AS SHE ASCENDED THE STAIRS. THE WOOD FELT FRESHLY POLISHED, AND THE HOUSE SMELLED OF JASMINE.

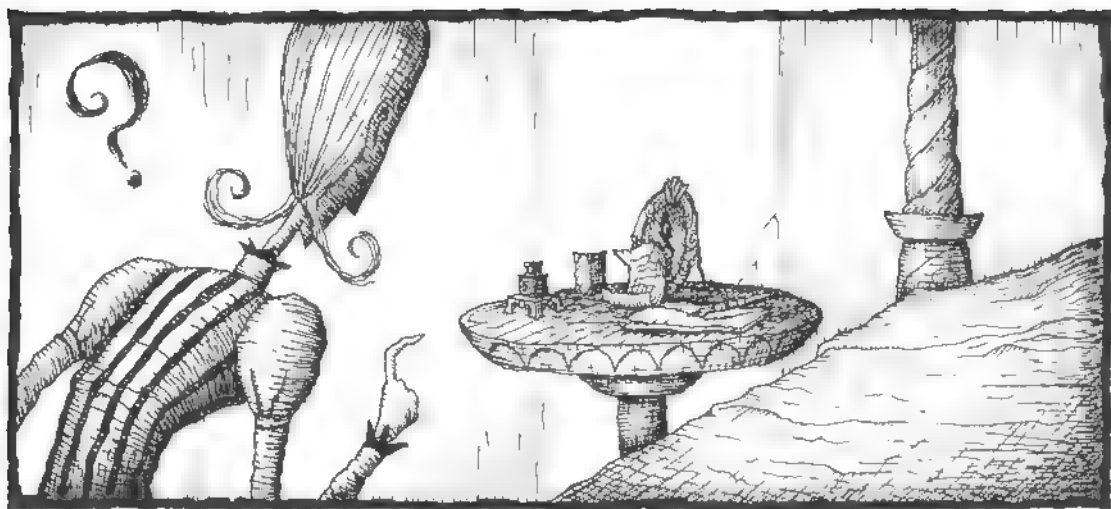
DID I TELL THE CLEANING GIRL THAT IS MY FAVORITE SCENT?

THE UPPER ROOMS WERE AS BEAUTIFUL AS THE LOWER ONES, EVERY VASE FILLED WITH FRESH FLOWERS; THE ROOMS WERE WARM AND FILLED WITH THE GLOW OF CANDLES.

HOW IN HEAVEN'S NAME DID SHE DO ALL OF THIS IN ONE AFTERNOON?

VICTORIA'S ROOM WAS STUNNING, BUT THERE WAS NO CLEANING GIRL IN SIGHT.



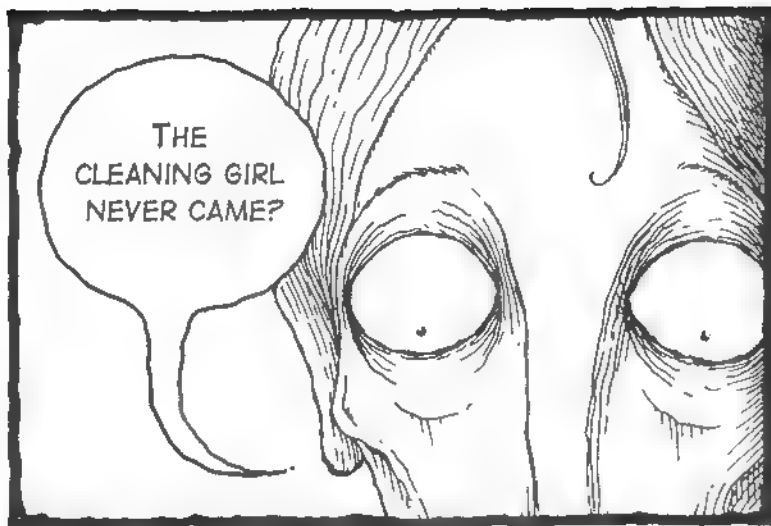


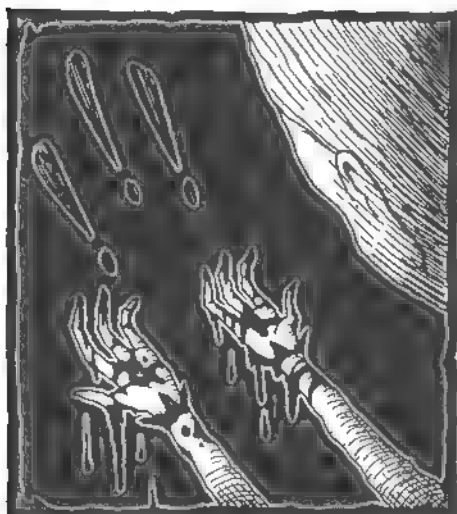
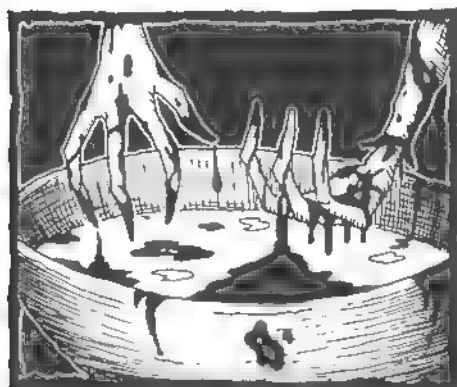
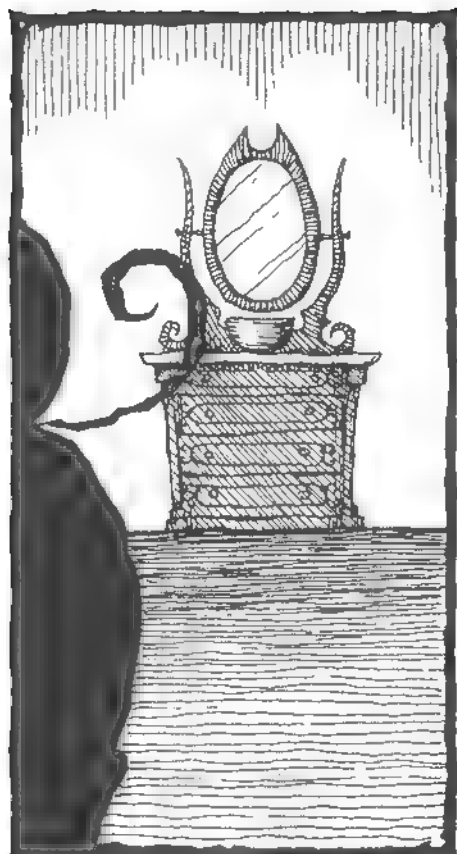
MADAME VICTORIA,

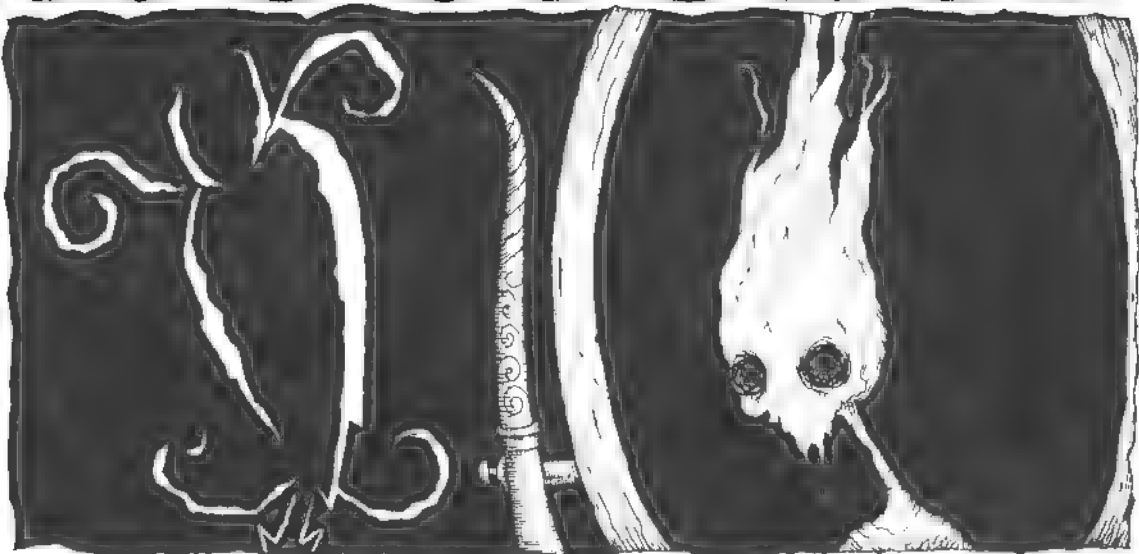
IT GRIEVES ME TO INFORM YOU I WAS UNABLE TO CLEAN
YOUR HOUSE AS PROMISED. YOU WILL FIND THAT I HAVE
RETURNED THE PAYMENT YOU SENT ME IN FULL. YOU MAY
THINK ME IGNORANT AND FOOLISH FOR BEING FRIGHTENED
OF THIS HOUSE, BUT THE FACT REMAINS THAT IT DOES
TERRIFY ME. YOU WOULD DO WELL TO FIND ANOTHER
HOME, MADAME VICTORIA. I WISH YOU ALL THE BEST
- YOU ARE IN MY PRAYERS,

MOLLY O'BRIEN











TO BE CONTINUED...

GloomCookie welcomes a new artist!



Vincent Batignole, *GloomCookie*'s new artist from France, makes his comics debut in July 2005 with *GloomCookie* #24, bringing a style and grace to the series that blends beautifully with Serena Valentino's storytelling.

In the wake of *The Carnival Wars*, Sebastian suffers guilt for killing Marguerite and making everyone in his life disappear. Moon Raven tells Vermilion she has *The Power of the Nosferatu* and it was she who made all the GloomCookies vanish, catching Vermilion's extreme interest. Meanwhile Sebastian struggles with the responsibility of his actions and the enormous powers he has at his command.

Nightmares & Fairy Tales #14 – September 2005

SERENA VALENTINO & CRAB SCRAMBLY

1140 RUE ROYALE CONTINUES...

VICTORIA SEEKS THE HELP OF THE CHURCH WHEN THINGS START TO GET FRIGHTFULLY DANGEROUS IN THIS CONTINUING STORY ABOUT AN ELDERLY WOMAN AND HER YOUNG NIECE WHO MOVE INTO A HOUSE THAT IS HAUNTED BY THE VENGEFUL VICTIMS OF HORRIFIC CRIMES THAT WERE INFLICTED BY THE HOUSE'S PREVIOUS OWNER, MADAME LALAURIE.



HELLO MY DARLINGS,

CRAB SCRAMBLY AND I HAVE HAD A VISION FOR RUE ROYALE FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS NOW, AND I AM SO HAPPY WE ARE FINALLY SEEING IT REALIZED IN NIGHTMARES & FAIRY TALES. PERSONALLY, I HAVE WANTED TO WRITE THIS STORY FOR ABOUT FIVE YEARS NOW, AND I'M THRILLED NOT ONLY TO BE FINALLY WRITING IT, BUT ALSO TO HAVE SUCH A TALENTED ARTIST TO BRING HIS OWN UNIQUE APPROACH TO THE PROJECT. CRAB AND MYSELF HAVE PUT SO MUCH ENERGY, TIME AND RESEARCH INTO RUE ROYALE; AT TIMES I FEEL CRAB SURPASSES EVEN MY OWN ENTHUSIASM AND DEDICATION TO THE PROJECT - WHICH SEEMS AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK IN LIGHT OF HOW CLOSE NIGHTMARES & FAIRY TALES IS TO MY HEART.

BEFORE I CLOSE, I WANT TO THANK ALL OF OUR READERS FOR THE LOVELY LETTERS, EMAILS, AND CONVENTION CHATS LETTING US KNOW YOU HAVE BEEN ENJOYING THE SERIES - AND TO EXPRESS THAT EVEN THOUGH FSC WILL BE MISSED, YOU WERE PLEASED AND EXCITED TO HEAR THE BOOK WOULD CONTINUE WITH CRAB SCRAMBLY.

NIGHTMARES & FAIRY TALES: 1140 RUE ROYALE IS A LABOR OF LOVE FOR BOTH CRAB AND MYSELF AND I SINCERELY HOPE YOU ENJOY IT OVER THE NEXT SIX ISSUES.

-SERENA VALENTINO

